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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/643,470	08/19/2003	Yasuyuki Fujita	Furuta C-37	4088
23474	7590	04/26/2004	EXAMINER	
FLYNN THIEL BOUTELL & TANIS, P.C. 2026 RAMBLING ROAD KALAMAZOO, MI 49008-1699				PEDDER, DENNIS H
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3612				

DATE MAILED: 04/26/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/643,470	FUJITA ET AL. <i>[Signature]</i>
	Examiner Dennis H. Pedder	Art Unit 3612

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE ____ MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 April 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-5,7-10,12-14,17-19,22-24 and 26-28 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,6,11,15,16,20,21 and 25 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____. |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 2-5, 7-10, 12-14, 17-19, 22-24, 26-28 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper of 4/5/2004.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1, 6, 11, 15-16, 20-21, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim language to “or”, “and the like” defines alternative and indefinite language. Terms such as “unprovided” define indefinite negative limitation contrary to statute.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out

the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

6. Claims 1, 6, 11, 15-16, 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. in view of Minami et al..

Lee et al. defines all subject matter less the cover lip including a Shore A hardness of 70-100 at root portion 30, with a seal hardness of 40-55. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide in Lee et al. a cover lip 32 as taught by Minami et al. in order to conceal a flange. The conversion chart Efunda is included to illustrate that an HS scale of 90 is equivalent to a Shore A scale of 84.

As to claim 6, the grip body is exposed.

As to claim 11, grip bodies bent at corner regions are common knowledge in the art, and heating and cooling are process steps not given patentable weight in a product claim (MPEP 2113).

Applicant may seasonably challenge, for the official record in this application, this and any other statement of judicial notice in timely manner in response to this office action. Please specify the exact statement to be challenged. Applicant is reminded, with respect to the specific challenge put forth, of the duty of disclosure under Rule 56 to disclose material which is pertinent to patentability including claim rejections challenged by applicant.

As to claim 20, process steps to extrusion are also not given patentable weight.

7. Claims 21, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. in view of Minami et al. as applied to claims 1 and 6 above, and further in view of Guillon.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to provide in the references above inner and outer walls to a grip part of unequal length as taught by Guillon in order to enhance contact force by the increased contact area. As to claims 21 and 25, both walls are of the same material.

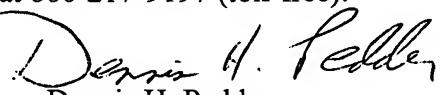
Conclusion

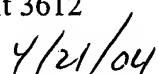
8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Shelton is cited to teach adhesive attachment.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dennis H. Pedder whose telephone number is (703) 308-2178. The examiner can normally be reached on 5:30-2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn D. Dayoan can be reached on (703) 308-3102. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Dennis H. Pedder
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3612


4/21/04